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LETTER FROM DR. HARLAN.

To the Editors of the Philadelphia Medical Examiner.

London, January 15th, 1839.—Since our last we have passed much of our time in the Royal College and British Museum—two exhaustless resources of amusement and instruction; and, in connection with the practice and museums of the various hospitals and medical schools of this boundless metropolis, constitute a most valuable resort for the student or physician who has already finished a practical course of studies in the less expensive institutions of Paris. Agreeably to the appointment alluded to in our last, we waited on Sir Astley Cooper, to witness his interesting operation on the rabbit, in which, and in other small animals, he induces death in a very short space of time, by the simultaneous pressure on the carotid and vertebral arteries of both sides—and, as he avers, absolutely without pain to the animal. He caused me to repeat the experiment before him, in order to assure himself that we adequately comprehended the modus operandi.

We then took our leaves, with the letters of introduction, which he had so obligingly offered us, to MM. Roux, Velpeau, Lisfranc, and Fisher, of Paris.

During our visit to the Royal College of Surgeons this morning, Mr. Owen offered us a microscopical view of the new species of Entozoon, discovered by him in 1835; it exists, in incalculable numbers, in some men, women and children, both in healthy and in diseased bodies—the muscles appear to be studded over with white dots, as if disseminated with calcareous depositions—and those most commonly affected are the great pectoral, latissimus dorsi, abdomiles, &c.; no muscles, however, being exempt. The worms have also been detected in Prussia, but not as yet in Paris. As Mr. Owen has already well described this parasite, under the name of "*Trichina spiralis*," in the Encyclopœdia of Anatomy and Physiology of Tod and others, I have only to add, that Mr. Owen kindly presented me with specimens, requesting me to ascertain if the same exist in Americans.

We have been exceedingly interested in attending the meetings of the various learned societies in London; in fact, every evening in the week might be thus advantageously spent. The Royal Society, the Linnæan, and Geological, meet once a fortnight, all on different nights, and a club dinner is given by each immediately preceding the meeting.

We have found the fare excellent on these occasions, where good company, good wine, and good order prevail. We had a very interesting discussion at the Geological Society, based on a memoir which I read on the fossil remains of the immense extinct animal from Alabama, which I had described under the name of *Basilosaurus*—the question to be determined being, whether or not this fossil belonged really to the Saurian or Mammiferous order. The strongest argument of its mammiferous nature, was derived from certain analogies which Mr. Owen discovered in his microscopical examinations of sections of the teeth of this fossil, and those of the *Dugoney*. For the detailed account of this discussion, I must refer you to the notice published in the Athenæum a few days subsequently, and to the forthcoming volume of the Transactions of the London Geological Society.

London is at present enlightened by hundreds of lecturers on all subjects. We listened to a very interesting clinical discourse to-day, by Sir Benjamin Brodie, at St. George's Hospital, on certain diseases of the bones.

Drs. Hall and Grainger are delivering admirable lectures on the nervous system, ably illustrated by comparative anatomy; and Dr. Grant's discourses on comparative anatomy would in themselves compensate for a voyage across the Atlantic. We are to attend the Royal Geographical Society's meeting on Wednesday, and to hear Professor Faraday lecture at the Royal Institution, on Friday evening next. On Sunday last, we again had the honor to meet, at Mr. W. Lawrence's hospitable board, a very agreeable society of ladies and gentlemen.

Among the liberal dispensers of hospitality to scientific foreigners, and more particularly to their "*transatlantic brethren*"—for this is the designation which, by common consent, is hereafter to be applied to our compatriots—none surpass our enlightened friend, Mr. Lawrence; the high encomium bestowed by this admirable writer on American institutions and our men of science, in his celebrated work, "The Physiology and Natural History of Man," together with the friendly disposition he has ever been so ready to show to members of our profession visiting London, has long rendered his name particularly popular with us. I am aware that his unsurpassed professional fame, either as a writer, lecturer, or practitioner of surgery, can receive no addition from any encomiums in my power to express; but in thus casually alluding to the subject at all, I could not say less of one, to whose liberal hospitality myself and numerous friends have so often and so extensively been indebted. His merits, indeed, could be only adequately expressed, by stating that they are equalled by the brilliant success which has finally crowned his intellectual and professional exertions. I presume that his income is surpassed by very few of his European competitors. The trustees of the Royal College of Surgeons have displayed their discrimination, and, at the same time, conferred a well-merited compliment on Mr. Lawrence, in choosing him as the principal director of that magnificent and unrivalled anatomical and physiological cabinet, which has grown out of Hunter's museum, a colossal monument of British taste and of British munificence, contemplated with sentiments of pride and delight by every true votary of science, and which is admirably calculated to perpetuate the fame and hand down the name of its illustrious founder and enlightened directors to the latest posterity.

I have been examining, with great interest, at the College of Surgeons, a descriptive catalogue of the museum, preparing by Messrs. Clift and Owen; several volumes in quarto have already been published; they are illustrated with numerous plates, and would form a most valuable acquisition to our public libraries and scientific institutions. I hope you will recommend the purchase of a copy for the library of the Philadelphia Hospital. I presume there could be no difficulty in the American Philosophical Society and Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia making an exchange, pro rata, for this invaluable contribution to physiology and anatomy.

In going the rounds, with Mr. Mayo, at the Middlesex Hospital, he showed us some cases of considerable interest; among them, cases of "Acute Anchylosis" of the knee-joint, distinguishable at first from common cases ending in anchylosis, in the inflammation and pain being unattended with swelling of the joint, and the disorganization and stiffness being completed in two or three months. Sir Benjamin Brodie has also noticed the same variety of disease, and I think both these surgeons have published their experience in the recent number of the Medico-Chirurgical Transactions.

I had the pleasure of meeting Sir Benjamin Brodie, and twelve other eminent members of the profession, including Carswell, Grant, Sharpey, &c., at the house of Professor B. Phillips—gentlemen whose scientific acquirements are far from being limited to their own immediate professions. Sir B. B. considers it easy to distinguish scrofulous from syphilitic caries of the bones ab origine, by the latter affection being always preceded by evident symptoms of pain and inflammation; whilst the first indication of strumous caries, is a small, hard, indolent, osseous tumor in different parts of the frame, notably in the metatarsal and metacarpal bones; and even at this early period of the disease, it is already too late for the successful operation of any remedies; no means can prevent, sooner or later, suppuration of the neighboring soft parts, and subsequent caries, which is not superficial, either, but is seated deep in the bone; hence, Mr. B. says, the disease must have originated in the medullary portion.

Saturday, January 19th.—Last evening we were delighted with Mr. Faraday's discourse, at the Royal Institution, on the physiology of the torpedo, gymnotics and silucus, as connected with electricity. He has recently been occupied in experimenting on a torpedo now living at the Gallery of Practical Science, Adelaide street. Mr. F. is a superlatively neat manipulator, and eloquent lecturer; he riveted the attention of a numerous and intellectual audience, including many distinguished foreigners, both of the scientific and diplomatic corps. We strike our tent and embark for Havre to-morrow. I hope soon to communicate with you from Paris. Respectfully, yours, etc. R. Harlan.

[In a letter written previously, but not received till after the foregoing, Dr. H. alludes to some interesting investigations by Mr. Owen into the structure of the teeth.]

December 31*st*.—In company with Mr. Van Buren, we visited, by invitation, Mr. Richard Owen, curator of the Royal College of Surgeons, at 6½ P. M., for the purpose of examining, with the microscope, numerous specimens of the teeth of various animals, recent and fossil, prepared by Mr. O. with the view of illustrating the intimate structure of these organs, in a memoir which he is now preparing for the Philosophical Transactions, London.

According to Mr. O.'s investigations, the human tooth consists of enamel, ivory, and the "*pars petrosa*," or cement; or, of a central pillar of ivory, covered by enamel on the crown and body, and with cement around the root and cervix. The structure of the ivory is essentially tubular, consisting of animal cylinders or tubes proceeding from the central cavity transversely to the axis of the tooth, to the sides, and perpendicularly to the crown, so as to oppose their distal extremities to the points of greatest pressure: these tubes he names "calcigerous," as they are found to contain the earthy part of the tooth; they are occasionally observed to extend beyond the line of juncture of the ivory with the enamel, as if for the purpose of increasing the attachment between the two surfaces, but are generally received, and are lost in the body of the ivory; each of these tubes is separated from its neighbor by a space greater than its own diameter, which space is filled by lateral tubes of a similar nature, and terminating in cells. The tubular structure of this ivory, Mr. O. is well aware, was not only known, but adequately illustrated, by Lewenhœck. These calcigerous tubes do not run in a straight line, but their general tendency is a curvature upwards, and, in addition to which, each line or tube is distinctly waved in itself. These facts Mr. O. lucidly illustrated in numerous prepared specimens from the teeth of the human subject, those of the shark, both fossil and recent, the horse, the fossil icthyosaurus, iguanodan, the elephant, the megatherium, dinotherium, several fishes fossil and recent, and others equally instructive.

Mr. O. further illustrated his subject, by referring to the pathology of these organs; he had examined numerous decayed teeth, in every instance of which the caries had commenced in the space or position beneath the enamel, between it and the ivory, and had extended itself towards the central cavity in the direction of the calcigerous tubes, a phenomenon by no means explicable by the usually received notions of the laminated structure of the teeth. The original cause of decay in these cases, Mr. O. refers to the generation of an acid, or, at least, of a fluid which soon becomes acid, between the enamel and the ivory.

Mr. O. next proceeded to illustrate the structure of enamel, by means of the same excellent microscope of Pritchard; this striated structure is of a crystalline texture, the striæ consisting of hexahedral prisms, always arranged at right angles with the superfices, a disposition which offers the greatest resistance to friction; these striæ differ in color and density from the ivory.

The "pars petrosa," or cement, is always *tubular* in structure, appearing under the microscope as lines interspersed with minute black dots, or corpuscles; these tubes he denominates "*medulliferous*," inasmuch as they carry marrow; and in most other respects, this cement resembles ordinary bone in structure and composition. Another important discovery due to the researches of Mr. O., is the peculiar structure of the teeth of the megatherium; these were formerly described by Cuvier as pillars of bone surrounded and traversed by enamel. Mr. O. demonstrates that portion of these teeth usually considered as enamel, to consist of a finer and denser kind of ivory; the body of these teeth consists, therefore, of common ivory, traversed by transverse ridges of denser ivory, and surrounded by cement, or pars petrosa. In all cases these interesting and novel facts were abundantly illustrated by numerous objects, both of human and comparative anatomy, and bore ample testimony to the acumen and laborious research of the experimenter, and of the important results to physiology to be derived from investigations of comparative anatomy, and which reflect on our neglect at home of this indispensable department of experimental philosophy. You will find a notice of these admirable investigations of Mr. Owen, in the account of the last meeting of the "British Association" at Newcastle, published in the London Athenæum, which will be completed "in extenso" in the forthcoming volumes of the "Transactions of the Royal Society." The "Memoirs" will appear in Decades, and be beautifully illustrated.

We were further impressed by a most curious fact connected with these interesting microscopic investigations of Mr. O., viz., that the different *species* of animals were shown to be recognizable by specific arrangements of their dental structure!

DR. BUGARD'S TREATISE ON GENERATION.

[Continued from page 59.]

Before considering, in detail, the different changes that take place at the moment of fecundation and during pregnancy, both in the uterus and in the other organs which perform some function in the act of generation, I shall endeavor to describe the result of that act, considered at the time of labor.

The abdomen then presents a large tumor, nearly round, the circumference of which reaches the epigastrium and the pubis; the opening of the vulva, the lips of which are very much thickened, is much longer than before fecundation. The mammæ are swollen and filled with milk. The uterus contains the fœtus; the liquor amnii, in which the fœtus is suspended by the umbilical cord; the amnion, which contains the liquor amnii and the fœtus; the decidua propria and reflexa; and the placenta, which generally adheres to the bottom of the uterus, and which is connected with the embryo or fœtus by the umbilical cord.

The placenta is divided into two parts; the maternal, or that which is in contact with the uterus, and the fœtal, or that which is on the side of the fœtus, and into which the umbilical cord is implanted. The division of these two parts is perfect, as it is impossible, without laceration, to ſorce ſrom the one to the other the finest or most penetrating injection. The function of this organ seems to be to prepare the necessary fluids for the nutrition and growth of the fœtus.

The liquor amnii seems to serve only to protect the fœtus against the immediate pressure of the neighboring organs.

The decidua propria and reflexa seem to be destined, as pregnancy advances, to assist the amnion to hold its contents till the time of labor.

Such are the objects produced during pregnancy. When and how their growth commences and takes place, are the subjects of the following observations.

Fecundation, as I have already observed, is produced by the contact of the sperm with the vesicle which is to be ſecundated. But the narrow and crooked passage through which that fluid has to pass to reach the vesicular glands, has appeared so great a difficulty that many physiologists have thought the passage was impossible. But to me it appears to be as easy as it is natural, if the following theory be true in all its particulars. During the act of coition the seminal fluid is emitted and deposited in the vagina. At the same instant, or soon after, the orgasm of the sexual parts of the female takes place. I fancy that orgasm consists in several successive dilatations and contractions of the uterus, which produce the effect of a pump; that is, when that organ dilates, it sucks in the spermatic fluid deposited in the vagina and forces it into one of the Fallopian tubes, or both, when it contracts; the contraction commencing at the mouth, and being gradually but quickly exerted towards the fundus. By the effect of that same orgasm, the Fallopian tube surrounds, with its fringy extremity, the vesicular gland, presses it as a hand would do, detaches thus from it the fecundated vesicle, which, by a gradual pressure, it pushes through its length, with the sperm that it contains, until it reaches the interior of the uterus.

This theory explains the possibility of fecundation without introducing the penis into the vagina, provided the spermatic fluid can penetrate into that passage, and its communication with the uterus and the vesicular glands be not perfectly intercepted. The principle upon which it is established, is that which is recognized by philosophers, and thus expressed, *natura horret vacuum.*

But how and when does the development of what constitutes the contents of the uterus at the time of labor, commence? To explain this more intelligibly, it is necessary to examine the composition of the vesicle before fecundation.

If it be true that any germ or seed contains the principle of that which it is to produce, together with the necessary apparatus for its development and growth, and this no one will deny; and if the vesicle is submitted to that universal and recognized law of nature, and why should it not be? I have no doubt that if the eye of the observer were sufficiently penetrating, he would find within its membrane the rudiments of the fœtal part of the placenta, the umbilical cord, the embryo, with at least the heart, together with arteries and veins containing the principle of the blood, nerves and aqua amnii; the rudiments of the placenta being constituted by the capillary extremities of the arteries and veins of the umbilical cord, and perhaps of some nerves, and placed at the point by which the vesicle, before being fecundated, is attached to the vesicular gland; the umbilical cord being the prolongation of the rudiments of the placenta, and reaching to the heart of the embryo, which I consider as the fundamental part, as the organ which, through the blood, provides for the formation, nutrition and growth of all the other parts. But it may be asked, since the vesicle contains all that is required for the formation of the fœtus, why is fecundation necessary? It is to impart to it a principle which it has not before that operation, the principle of a life which is to become independent. Mysterious principle! as difficult to understand as the source from which it springs. That principle is a spiritual principle, which escapes our senses, but its presence is easily recognized, since it may be asserted that it consists in that condition the absence of which constitutes death, and the presence of which constitutes life; which condition is no other than the motion executed by the circulation of the sap in the vegetable kingdom, and of the blood in the animal. So that the vesicle may be considered as containing all the material principles of man or woman, requiring only for their development to be put in motion, wanting only the presence of that spiritual principle of life which is imparted by man. Thus the vesicle may be compared to a complete piece of machinery whose parts are perfectly made and set together, and which remains in repose until some power puts it in action.

From this I conclude that the great work of gestation or pregnancy, or, in other words, the development of the contents of the vesicle, commences at the very moment of fecundation, when motion or circulation is established.

Of Pregnancy.—The time that the fecundated vesicle takes in passing through the Fallopian tube is not exactly ascertained. However, from a case related in Dr. Dunglison's Treatise on Physiology, 2d vol., page 327, it appears that about seven days are necessary. When the shortness of the distance it has to travel is considered, one is tempted to wonder why it does not arrive sooner at its destination. But as nature is never without an object, even in her most trifling operations, the astonishment ceases when, after having followed her to discover the secret, it is found in this case that it was necessary to make in the uterus preparations for the reception of the important being to which it is to become a home; and it is during the time of that passage that a membrane, the decidua, is formed in that organ, and lines every part of it. The functions of that membrane seem to be, 1st, to present an obstacle to the vesicle that it may not fall on the mouth or neck of the uterus; 2d, to direct it towards the centre of that organ; 3d, to serve as a soft and elastic bed during the first part of its abode in its new lodging; 4th and finally, to assist the amnion in holding its contents, the whole of which, I suppose, takes place in the following manner.

The vesicle being obliged to pass through a tube of a diameter much smaller than its own, necessarily takes an elongated form, and as soon as it enters the cavity of the uterus, it pushes the decidua until the whole of its length is lodged in the same cavity; the decidua being thus pushed, gradually and equally detaches itself from all sides, and folds within itself, so that the point of pressure is naturally directed towards the centre of the space which it lines; and, by one of those wise provisions of nature, the length of the vesicle, in its now elongated form, is such that when its anterior extremity reaches the middle of the cavity of the uterus, the other is in contact with the orifice of the Fallopian tube, where, being no longer urged forward, it stops and adheres, provided no accident or violent concussion changes its situation.

Of the Placenta.—The sperm, in fecundating the vesicle, surrounds it; but in passing through the narrow aperture of the Fallopian tube it is mostly collected together, and forms a kind of small mass at its posterior extremity, where without doubt it performs two important objects, first, that of preventing the contents of the vesicle from escaping from its membrane, during the pressure which it is obliged to bear, and then to present to the capillary extremities of the vessels of the umbilical cord a substance in which they may develope themselves, and take, at least during the passage of the tube, the fluids that must be provided for the beginning of the development of the principles which it contains.

As soon as it arrives in the uterus this little mass stops, and, by means of the mucous part, which renders it viscous and sticky, lies close to the fundus of that organ, where it has been urged by the gradual pressure of the Fallopian tube, the circular fibres of which extend to that place, and there it forms the beginning of the maternal side of the placenta. The vesicle is soon covered with flocculi, a particular kind of filaments, which I consider as being produced by the organic particles of the seminal fluid. These flocculi seem to be the organs by which nourishment is absorbed and prepared to be transmitted to the interior of the vesicle, for the development of its contents; but when they have exhausted the sources from which they at first derived that nourishment, they turn towards the fundus of the uterus, where their course is directed by the kind of sheath which is formed by the decidua reflexa, and, confounding themselves with the beginning of the maternal part of the placenta already formed, complete that organ, which sucks or absorbs from the uterus the necessary blood for its own growth, and transmits whatever is necessary to the fœtal part, where it is absorbed by the capillary extremities of the vein of the umbilical cord, to carry it to the heart of the embryo, which, after having used all that is necessary, sends the remainder to the fœtal part of the placenta, by the umbilical arteries, that it may provide for the growth of that part. The blood which is not consumed by that part, mingles with that provided by the maternal side, and is again absorbed by the capillaries of the veins of the cord, and carried to the heart with a new supply, in the same manner as in the adult the blood of the capillary extremities of the arteries passes into the capillary extremities of the veins, mingled with the different substances which are introduced into the circulation by the absorbing vessels. So that the maternal part of the placenta may be considered as a large absorbent, which, with a great many mouths, draws from the mother and transmits to the fœtal part the necessary substances for the nutrition and growth of the fœtus and the accessory organs.

[To be continued.]

THE LATE DR. HOLYOKE.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR—It is a received maxim that a story loses nothing by being repeated; and as I observe, from a remark in your last Journal, that a statement contained in my answers to the questions I was obliged to reply to, before the Committee of the Legislature, is in danger of sharing the fate of the celebrated story of the three black crows, I request the favor of your columns to state a few facts which may prove interesting to your readers, and serve to dispel the misconception and misconstruction which have attached themselves to my evidence.

The late venerable Dr. Holyoke, whose case has been alluded to, was an almost miraculous instance of a temperament and constitution to which error in physical habits is more difficult than the opposite is to those of most men. The exercise of habitual prudence and the avoidance of every excess, to him a most easy task, lengthened out his days to a century and over. It was natural, therefore, for his acquaintance to inquire into his habits of eating and drinking, as illustrative of the causes of his longevity. He gave a minute account of these habits, with his usual ingenuousness; and in this account stated that he had, for 40 or 50 years, made use of a drink which he estimated to be about the strength of cider, and which contained one part in six or eight of West India rum. Of this he took a moderate portion with his dinner, and sipped moderately with his pipe in the evening, never exceeding a pint of the mixture daily—for the most part, half the quantity. This is the account given in a letter written by my venerable friend after he had reached his 100th year; and if any person deduces from it an inference unfavorable to his sobriety and strict temperance, I cannot join him, although I admit that the example would not be a safe one to follow, since few men are constituted like Dr. Holyoke in being able to preserve entire moderation in the use of such a beverage, and never to require, during half a century's use, to augment the strength of so moderate a stimulus.

Now is any man prepared to say that this practice would create a scirrhous stomach? Surely I am not, nor have I ever given occasion for such an inference. But since the diseased alterations of every organ must have a cause connected with the exercise of the function of that organ, who would declare on oath that it was not possible that there was some connection between the morbid tissues discovered after death and the peculiar diet of the individual? And when this peculiar diet is insisted upon as the *cause* of extraordinary longevity, is it not perfectly fair to raise the objection that a scirrhous stomach was the cause of death, and that all active stimulants tend to impair the healthy state of that organ? For my own part, I have not subscribed my faith to Homœöpathy, and the operation of infinitessimal doses, nor to the ultra temperance principle that minute quantities of morbid poisons will work mischief in the human system to an indefinite period. A man may take poison and not be poisoned; the prussic acid in a peach leaf or bitter almond may be made to flavor a custard with as little danger as rose water.

And now, if your correspondent wishes my answer to his question, I reply, that having long been acquainted with the Doctor's family, and knowing that his daily use of alcohol was even less than the trivial amount his language expresses, and that his general health and constitution were capable of resisting successfully the attacks of noxious principles beyond those of most individuals, I have no suspicion that HIS use of alcohol shortened his days. I believe that in the evidence which I gave at considerable length on this subject, I was clearly understood, and but for the party spirit which seems to have attached itself to legislation on temperance, and in which, as a professional man, I have no desire to be involved, explanation would have been unnecessary. It is proper, also, that your readers should know, that the indelicacy of bringing Dr. Holyoke's name and his domestic habits before the public in this connection, does not rest with me or the counsel for supporting the present license law, but with the counsel for its repeal.

With regard to the opinion which I gave, and which has excited so much astonishment, that the death of my venerable friend, at 100 years and 7 months, was not from old age, but the result of disease, let it be tested by the facts, and when these are stated, your readers can form opinions for themselves. Dr. Holyoke had passed his 100th birth-day in his usual good health. His hearing and memory were defective. His other mental and physical faculties were better than those of the average of persons thirty years younger. He could walk several miles with ease, enjoyed the company and conversation of his friends, kept up his acquaintance with national politics, municipal affairs and professional knowledge ; read French, Latin and English books with his usual facility, and without the aid of glasses, even for small print, and was as free from the helplessness of dotage and senility as most men of 70. He seemed a sort of evergreen, and it was a delightful privilege to pass an hour in his company. About four months before his death he was attacked with pain in the region of his stomach ; this continued till he was confined to his bed. A fortnight before his death he had gangrene of one of his extremities. He retained his senses till within a few days of his death, which occurred on the 31st of March, 1829. His body was carefully examined, in presence of a number of physicians. The report of the autopsy was published in the memoir of his life, and in the 31st number of the New York Med. and Phys. Journal, for October, 1829, to which I refer for minute particulars.

The thorax was capacious and beautifully symmetrical ; the whole substance of the lungs free from any morbid changes of importance ; the heart was of proper size, not encumbered with fat, and of organization almost absolutely unimpaired, so as to cause the remark, amongst those who were present, that we saw no reason why it might not have lasted him another century, if his other organs had held out. The brain exhibited no changes which had any probable influence in determining his life. The stomach was contracted about the middle by a scirrhous band of considerable thickness, and including a third of its extent. The contraction was so great that the stomach was completely divided into two sacs, and the passage between them would hardly admit a finger. About the middle of the great curvature was a superficial ulcer, of an inch in extent.

The rest of the alimentary canal exhibited changes of more recent date, apparently the consequences of the primary disease of the stomach. The kidneys, ureters, bladder and prostate, so commonly altered by age, were for the most part unaltered. I am persuaded that few men of fifty could have been found, who would have exhibited the heart and other organs, usually altered by age, in so perfect a state as the subject of these remarks.

Does not this dissection tend to justify the remark of Sir Anthony Carlisle, that most aged persons die of actual disease in organs not worn out by the length of time they have been performing their functions? And do not the facts I have now stated sustain the correctness of my opinion, that *disease*, and not old age, terminated the life of the patriarch of our profession? With much regard, your friend,

Salem, March 7, 1839. A. L. PEIRSON.

CREOSOTE.—A correspondent writes—"The application of creosote in one instance has most certainly expelled the tooth-ache entirely, and doubtless destroyed the sensibility of the nerve." An English physician has used creosote for various forms of irritation of the bowels and stomach, in doses of from one to two minims with ℥j. of mucilage and ℥ix. of water, repeated in three, four or five hours.

REGISTER OF THE WEATHER,

Kept at the State Lunatic Hospital, Worcester, Ms. Lat. 42° 15′ 49″. *Elevation* 483 *ft.*

1839. Feb'ry.		THERM. Sun r.	2, P.M.	Sun s.	BAROMETER. Sun r.	2, P.M.	Sun s.	Wind, 2, P.M.	Weather, 2, P.M.	Remarks.
1	Frid.	16	26	26	29.50	29.46	29.40	N	Cloudy	Snow, commenced at 4 P. M. 2 inch.
2	Satur.	22	24	22	29.30	29.24	29.21	N W	Flying Clouds	[of snow fell.
3	Sun.	15	28	31	29.08	28.99	29.00	S W	Clear	Windy, damp and chilly.
4	Mon.	28	28	24	29.16	29.24	29.28	N W	Flying Clouds	High wind, squally.
5	Tues.	7	16	15	29.41	29.39	29.40	N W	Squally	
6	Wed.	6	14	12	29.40	29.42	29.45	W	Squally	High wind, squally, and very cold.
7	Thur.	3	19	19	29.66	29.63	29.59	S W	Cloudy	
8	Frid.	30	47	46	29.30	29.26	29.24	S W	Clear	Storm of rain in the night.
9	Satur.	36	30	20	29.11	29.31	29.44	N E	Cloudy	Snow fell 1 1-2 inch. Even. clear &
10	Sun.	4	23	26	29.64	29.65	29.60	N W	Clear	[pleasant.
11	Mon.	18	31	28	29.45	29.37	29.40	N	Cloudy	Evening, light snow.
12	Tues.	19	28	28	29.63	29.70	29.70	N W	Clear	Evening, very pleasant.
13	Wed.	20	38	40	29.69	29.65	29.65	S	Clear	
14	Thur.	26	36	36	29.56	29.55	29.56	S E	Cloudy	Evening, misty, with some snow.
15	Frid.	33	38	3[illegible]	29.53	29.53	29.52	S E	Cloudy	Evening, rainy.
16	Satur.	32	45	42	29.52	29.52	29.51	E	Flying Clouds	
17	Sun.	35	46	35	29.43	29.42	29.42	N E	Foggy	Evening, snow storm, 1 1-2 inch fell.
18	Mon.	29	37	34	29.43	29.43	29.49	N E	Cloudy	
19	Tues.	21	36	38	29.60	29.61	29.60	N W	Clear	
20	Wed.	33	40	42	29.50	29.51	29.52	N	Cloudy	Thaw, quite muddy.
21	Thur.	32	41	37	29.62	29.65	29.64	N	Cloudy	Evening, snow fell 3 inches.
22	Frid.	36	40	37	29.65	29.67	29.66	N E	Misty	Evening, rain.
23	Satur.	35	37	36	29.59	29.60	29.62	N W	Flying Clouds	Muddy.
24	Sun.	34	42	44	29.70	29.72	29.71	N	Hazy	
25	Mon.	36	41	39	29.51	29.22	29.18	S E	Rain	Evening, clear and pleasant.
26	Tues.	34	44	38	29.28	29.23	29.16	S E	Cloudy	Evening, rainy.
27	Wed.	34	41	41	28 73	28.90	28.90	N E	Cloudy	
28	Thur.	32	49	45	28.96	28.95	28.87	S W	Clear	Evening, light snow.

SUMMARY.—The month of February has been unusually mild, the thermometer not having once fallen to zero. The extremes of the thermometer have been 3° above zero, and 49. The month has been damp and cloudy; but little snow or rain has fallen. The extremes of the barometer have been 28.73 and 29.72. Snow has fallen from 6 to 8 inches only. The termination of the month exhibits all the appearance of spring.—Diseases at the hospital have been, pneumonia, scarlatina, erysipelas and catarrh; none fatal.

BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, MARCH 13, 1839.

DR. FLINT'S ADDRESS.

It would have been gratifying to have made earlier mention of this elaborate production of our old friend and neighbor. It is a closely printed pamphlet of thirty-one pages, and was delivered to the students of the Louisville Medical Institute at the opening of the lecture term in November last, and instead of being too long, is altogether too short for one who wishes to know more of the institutions of Europe, to an account of which a large portion of it is devoted. The doctor was there but a little time since, and he speaks, like one under no obligations, of all he saw or heard in the wards of hospitals, and the theatres of the surgeons. Our object, primarily, is to allow the professor to speak for himself, in paragraph, which is all the room we can afford him to-day.

"*Hygiea* was the daughter of Æsculapius, and succeeded to a large share of the veneration which, in all parts of the pagan world, was paid to that—probably fabulous—God and Father of Physic.

"She is represented as a beautiful female of perfect symmetry and development, in chaste attire, and modest mien, crowned with a wreath of medicinal herbs and flowers. Her right arm is raised, and entwined with a serpent—the emblem of her father's house, and of the universality of his art—which is gracefully extending its head towards a cup supported in her left.

"Under this attractive form, the art of preserving health was cultivated, at Greece, as a religious duty—its exercises furnishing a counteracting influence to that luxury and effeminacy which were the besetting sins of her citizens, and contributing to maintain that rare combination of grace and vigor, which was the physical characteristic of that beautiful people.

"Similar considerations relating to physical development and power, brought Hygiene into favor in Rome at an early period, when its associate department of medicine was rather contemned than respected by that rude and disease-defying people.

"Even at the time of the expulsion of the rational practitioners of the healing art from the city, we may discover the rudiments of that system of public hygiene, which continued to be a conspicuous element in the arrangements of Roman society, during all the political revolutions of the nation. Accordingly we find *Hygiea* among the earliest of the Grecian deities, domesticated at Rome; and a mythological fable of those times, represents her influence to have been so great as to provoke the jealousy of Pluto, and excite apprehensions of the depopulation of his ghostly domain.

"Although the moderns have deserted her temple and disowned her divinity, the service of Hygiea remains among the humane institutions of Christian civilization—its processes improved by the genius and science of those who have successively employed them, and its sphere of action extended to meet the exigencies of progressive society."

But this is not the kind of specimen to be shown to the reader. Still it exhibits the doctor's notions of the importance of hygiene. Skipping over many pages of instructive matter, we find him crouching for a spring upon the medical institutions of Paris, which deserve all that has been so freely and fearlessly said of them.

"Generalizing extremely the expression of my objections, I should say that 'the School' is weakened by the excessive elaborateness of its organization, and burdened by the multitude and detail of its lectures*—that anatomical instruction, both normal and pathological, is too deeply tinctured with transcendentalism—and that the practice in the hospitals is vitiated by a servile adherence to antiquated rules, or a spirit of rash, unjustifiable experiment in the present practitioners. In one or other of these two extremes, you may arrange all you can see of medical or surgical treatment in the general hospitals of Paris—the *juste milieu*, so much talked of by their politicians, has no place in the counsels of their physicians.

"I was exceedingly surprised to find how little of sound, rational, curative information could be gathered from the lessons and example of the hospital practitioners in their vaunted clinics, additional to what a respectable graduate of good American schools will possess before leaving home.

"In surgery, with the exception of a few specialities, they do not seem to have improved on the practice of Ambrose Paré, and exhibit but little of the independent, patient spirit of progress which distinguished that great man. Certainly they cannot be said to have entered on the epoch of John Hunter; and although the labors and accomplishments of their own Bichat are admired and praised, and his portrait honored with a place in the Hotel Dieu, I could not perceive that the inmates of that institution were realizing, from the application of his principles to the treatment of disease, anything like the advantages they have secured to the sick, even on this distant continent.

"The French practise surgery too etymologically, if I may so speak, as if it were a mere handicraft or species of trade. They put on their aprons and go to work, for all the world like so many barbers or bakers, emulating each other in the elaborateness of their dressings, burdening and tormenting diseased and wounded parts, *more canonico*, with that same system of absurd appliances, so admirably criticised by Mr. J. Bell, in his chapter on adhesion. The barbarous cautery is still in too much favor with the Parisian surgeon, and most of the old-fashioned notions respecting suppuration, digestion, &c., with the painful appliances they indicate, appear to be a part of the orthodox surgery of Parisian hospitals. Not that novelties are unknown there—but modifications of practice, to be attractive to them, must be extravagant, ultra, or even fantastical. They entertain, with enthusiasm, a plan for curing *Fistula Lachrymalis*, by obliterating the puncta, for healing amputated stumps by enclosing them in wooden ovens, or for retaining the fragments of a shattered limb in comfortable and sanative contiguity, by crushing them in the rolls of a tightly applied bandage. It was not a little amusing, indeed, to observe the last-named conceit, after having run the gauntlet of rational surgery, from the valley of the Seine to that of the Mississippi, returned to the place of its origin, and figuring among the novelties of La Pitié. And there it belongs—in a French hospital, where neither fatality nor any less mischievous consequence seems a valid objection to any scheme or proceeding, by which a practitioner can acquire a temporary notoriety, in contrast with his competitors and rivals."

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* In one respect, however, the routine of instruction is on a better plan than that which is pursued among us—there are but *three* lectures a day at 'the School,' during the term, and no one professor lectures oftener than three times a week.

"To these disparaging views of general surgery, there are admirable exceptions presented in the practice of gentlemen who have devoted themselves to particular departments of the art. Among these is M. Ricord, who, carrying into his ample field of observation, an enlightened sense of our deficiencies and desiderata in that class of diseases, has established discriminating views and sound rules of practice, which, so far as ends can justify the use of means of equivocal propriety, extenuate, at least, the means—some of them of doubtful morality—which he has employed in their attainment.

"A similar commendation is due to MM. Civiale and Leroy."

A multitude of claims, from other sources, quite forbid a more enlarged notice, or a greater number of extracts. A free circulation of the pamphlet will have an excellent influence on the prosperity of the Louisville school, and certainly afford the friends of science much pleasure and permanent satisfaction.

Asylums for Inebriates.—A pamphlet of thirty-eight octavo pages, containing 18 essays on the importance of establishing asylums for drunkards, is now before the public. It was written by Dr. Woodward, of the Worcester Insane Hospital, and merits a careful perusal. It seems, by the preface, that the articles were published five years ago, in the Boston Mercantile Journal, and at the solicitation of the friends of the temperance reformation (a great and good work, which, for the honor of the age, we fervently hope will be sustained all over the habitable globe) they have been embodied in their present connected form, for convenient circulation. The author, who is a philanthropist as well as an experienced physician, in reference to the creation of institutions for the express residence of inebriates, speaks thus—"The writer may say, without ostentation, that his advantages for ascertaining the results of confinement and entire abstinence from intoxicating drinks for a long period, have been rare and unusual, having now been connected for twelve successive years with *two* institutions, in which numerous individuals, amounting to many hundreds, were confined, who by intemperance had become insane, or who had perpetrated crimes which rendered confinement necessary. The result of this experience has been the fullest conviction, that a large proportion of the intemperate, in a well-conducted institution, would be radically cured, and would again go into society with health re-established, diseased appetites removed, with principles of temperance well grounded and thoroughly understood, so that they would be afterwards safe and sober men." The subject is surely one of vast importance to the community, and therefore the publication commends itself to every reflecting mind. Unless the reformation does succeed, a house for the confinement of insane drunkards will ultimately be as necessary for many towns, as an almshouse for the poor.

Massachusetts General Hospital Annual Report.—This note is principally for the purpose of acknowledging the civility of Dr. Bell, from whom a copy of the report was kindly sent. As a statistical document it is important, and will doubtless be received, as those were which have preceded it, with satisfaction by the public. It is always gratifying to know how public charities are managed in the interior, which it is the object of these annual publications to explain. From January 1838, to January 1839, in the hospital in Boston, 380 patients were received; 174 were discharged well; 66 much relieved; 35 died; 3 eloped, and 48 were not relieved. The greatest number of patients in the house at any one time, 53. Expenses of the hospital for 1838, $13,096 54. Connected with this is the McLean Asylum for the Insane, at Charlestown, an admirably conducted institution. The whole number of patients remaining in the asylum at the commencement of the year, was 86; and there were received during the year 1838, 138 persons, which gives a total of 224 who enjoyed the benefits of this excellent charity. The year's expenditure, including $1,490 79 for a new building, was $20,096 71. The manner in which the trustees manage the two, is deserving of the highest commendation. Beside being liberally disposed, and always ready to co-operate with those who propose judicious improvements, they are not forever interfering with the medical officers, which is the cause of so much ill temper, and operates so disastrously, in several of a kindred nature in neighboring cities.

Medical Miscellany.—A certain Mr. Gannel is doing wonders, in England, in the way of embalming birds, asses and men, in Little Windmill-street Anatomical Theatre. He uses two liquids; one being injected into the arteries for preserving them, and the other simply resorted to for staying the putrefactive process while dissecting.—Mr. Streeter exhibited to the Westminster Medical Society, lately, the œsophagus of a patient which was contracted to the size of a crow-quill.—There has been a vulgar quarrel at the far-famed Salop Infirmary, England; Drs. Dugard and H. Johnson, and another Dr. Johnson, not agreeing in anything but vilifying each other's character, are all crying out to the Shrewsbury public for redress.—A strange fœtal malformation has been pictured by Bolton, of Lambeth, which is nothing more nor less than a prodigious pair of legs, without a head.—Dr. Marshall Hall's lectures on the nervous system are excellent, but too insufferably long. One of the last on the excito-motory system is minute to a fault, and has too much theory for its facts.—Muller's Elements of Physiology is out, in England, in three distinct parts.—Dr. Alexander Tweedie's Library of Medicine is preparing for publication.—Dr. William Turner has been elected chairman of the general committee of whig young men, in New York.—A woman who had been blind twelve years, suddenly received her sight, most unexpectedly, without having done anything to promote it.—Dr. Flint says, after speaking of the principal hospitals of Europe—"I must regard as the best hospital in all its essential attributes, that I have ever noticed, the Massachusetts General Hospital at Boston."—The Lunatic Asylum at Halle, is an old prison.—In Russia there are asylums for the insane, well conducted.—It seems by some old papers found in the State paper office, in Ireland, that lithotrity was actually practised in that country one hundred and eighty years ago.

Died,—At Southborough, Mass., Dr. Joseph Bullard, 65.—At Louisville, Ky., Dr. Daniel Brent, 22.—At New Orleans, Richard Davidson, M.D., 57—a distinguished member of the profession.

Whole number of deaths in Boston for the week ending March 9, 34. Males, 12—females, 22.

Of consumption, 6—infantile, 2—croup, 2—typhous fever, 2—lung fever, 4—inflammation of the lungs, 2—teething, 1—scarlet fever, 6—hooping cough, 1—marasmus, 2—intemperance, 1—abscess, 1—child-bed, 1—dropsy on the brain, 1—casualty, 1—inflammation of the brain, 1—stillborn, 1.

BROWN'S PATENT SELF-INJECTING APPARATUS.

The undersigned respectfully calls the attention of medical practitioners to a newly-invented instrument, which is for sale at his store, No. 481 Washington street, corner of Elliot street. If physicians would examine the principles of its construction, they would appreciate its usefulness, and would probably be induced to recommend it very generally in their practice. Physicians, druggists, and the inhabitants of Boston, are particularly invited to look into the superiority of this article over the inventor's former instrument, as it now has the advantage of Goodyear's new India Rubber, which is allowed by all to be an entirely different article from that formerly manufactured.

Feb. 6—eoply WILLIAM BROWN.

DR. HULL'S UTERO-ABDOMINAL SUPPORTER.

This new instrument for the radical cure of Prolapsus Uteri, or Falling of the Womb, by external application, superseding the use of the objectionable pessary, is confidently recommended to the afflicted as the means of a perfect restoration to health, it never having failed of performing a cure, even under the most aggravated circumstances. It has received the decided approbation of Sir Astley Cooper, of London; Sir Benjamin C. Brodie; Sir James Clark, Physician to the Queen; Dr. Ashwell, Lecturer on Midwifery to Guy's Hospital; Dr. Rigby, Lecturer to St. Bartholomew's; Dr. Griffith, Lecturer to Westminster Hospital; Dr. Ramsbotham, Lecturer to London Hospital; Robert Ferguson, Lecturer to Westminster Lying-in Hospital; Dr. Sweatman, Lecturer to Middlesex Hospital, and Senior Accoucheur to Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital; also by Henry Davies, Conquest; Blundell, Lee, Merriman, Surgeon Keates, &c.; by Dr. Moreau, President of the Academie Royale de Medecine, Paris, and Accoucheur to the Duchess D'Orleans; Professors Velpeau, Marjolin, Paul Dubois, Sanson, and others—and in New York by Professor J. W. Francis; G. S. Bedford, M.D., Professor of Midwifery in University of the city of New York; Professor Delafield, Professor Francis U. Johnston, President County Medical Society; Laurens Hull, President Medical Society, State of New York; Professor James McNaughton, Albany; Professor March, Professor Cyrus Perkins, Professor Duane; James Webster, M.D., Professor of Anatomy and Surgery, Geneva; David L. Rodgers, Professor Surgery, Geneva College; Drs. Thomas Boyd, Gilbert Smith, Hosack, Stearns, Ludlow, Kissam, Vache, Power, Grayson, Van Rensselaer, and many other distinguished physicians of the United States.

AMOS G. HULL,
Office 4 Vesey Street, Astor House, New York.

☞ A constant supply of the above instruments will be kept by Reed, Wing & Cutler (late Lowe & Reed), No. 54 Chatham street, Boston. Lowe & Reed have sold many of the above instruments, and can refer to physicians of eminence by whom they have been highly approved, as well as to patients to whom they have afforded the most essential relief. Price $10. Feb. 13—6m

PRIVATE MEDICAL INSTRUCTION.

The subscribers are associated for the purpose of giving a complete course of medical instruction. Their pupils will have regular access to the medical and surgical practice of the Massachusetts General Hospital. They will be admitted, also, to the practice of the House of Correction, which constantly presents a large number of important cases, and where opportunities will be afforded for acquiring a practical knowledge of compounding and dispensing medicines. They will be furnished with opportunities for the study of Practical Anatomy, not inferior to any in the country. To the pupils, particularly to those in the last year of their professional studies, facilities will be afforded for acquiring a personal acquaintance with private medical and obstetric practice. Instruction by examinations or lectures will be given in the different branches of medical studies, during the interval between the public lectures of the University. Books, and a room with fire and lights, will be furnished to the students at the expense of the instructers.

GEORGE C. SHATTUCK,
WALTER CHANNING,
JOHN WARE,
GEORGE W. OTIS, Jr.
WINSLOW LEWIS, Jr.

Oct 31—eptf

AMERICAN MEDICAL ALMANAC.

American Medical Almanac, for 1839—designed for the daily use of Physicians, Surgeons, Students, and Apothecaries; being, also, a general Medical Directory of the United States. By J. V. C. Smith, M.D., Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal. Published by Marsh, Capen & Lyon, 133 Washington street, Boston. J 16.

NEW LEECH ESTABLISHMENT.

The medical profession are hereby informed that the subscriber has made such arrangements that he will be able to supply them with the best Foreign Leeches, at the lowest market price. They will be safely put up in boxes, with the clay in which they were imported. Physicians may be certain that careful attention will be given to their orders.

SETH W. FOWLE,
33 Prince St. corner of Salem St. Boston.

Oct. 17—lyeop

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